

**Summary of the
On-Site Assessment Committee Teleconference
January 10, 1997**

The On-Site Assessment Committee (OSAC) of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference on Friday, January 10, 1997. Mr. Gary Bennett, chair of the committee, led the meeting. A list of action items is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B.

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Bennett began the meeting with several announcements related to NELAC activities:

- The Second NELAC Interim Meeting is scheduled to be held in Bethesda, MD on February 3-6, 1997. All hotel reservations need to be booked by committee members as soon as possible.
- The committee will meet on Monday, February 3, from 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Advance notice is requested for all items of discussion at the NELAC Interim Meeting.

Those planning on attending the interim meeting include Gary Bennett, Marlene Patillo, George Dilbeck, Wayne Davis, Rosanna Buhl, and Owen Crankshaw (EPA contractor).

STATUS REPORT ON ASSESSOR TRAINING COURSE AND MANUAL

Chapters 1 and 2 of the Assessor Training Manual have been drafted and distributed to the committee, and Chapter 3 is currently being written under an EPA contract. Chapter 3 will be distributed to the committee prior to the February Interim Meeting, but the entire manual will not be complete until after the Interim Meeting. The assessor checklist still needs to be developed, and various checklists from other agencies and programs are being collected to be utilized during the development of the assessor checklist.

Comments were requested from committee members on the first two chapters of the manual. The following comments were received:

- Chapter 2, Section 2.2, does not contain a description of an introductory meeting with laboratory officials.
- In section 2.2.1, the laboratory tour does not include the hazardous waste storage and disposal system. This should be covered at least minimally. This led to some discussion about NELAC's responsibility for laboratory safety and compliance with regulations for waste storage and disposal. The general committee agreement was for the assessor to note any problems on the assessment report and, if appropriate, to report any serious problems to the proper agency. However, the committee agreed that on-site assessors do not have primary responsibility for assuring compliance with safety, health, and waste disposal regulations.

- The Chapter 1 discussion of roles and responsibilities needs more information on the roles and responsibilities of agencies other than the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA).
- Section 2.2 on auditing principles should state that there should be no potential conflict of interest during the audit.
- Section 2.2 needs a description of the closing meeting with the laboratory.
- The manual needs to state that there should be an opportunity for the laboratory to present evidence to resolve apparent discrepancies. All discrepancy resolutions should be backed up with objective evidence.
- The tone of the manual should consistently be positive, focusing on compliance and identification of problems.

There was general discussion about how much actual observation of technical procedures should occur. The committee agreed that while it would be ideal to observe all technical procedures, the temporal constraints of the assessment and the different technical abilities of the assessors would require the assessor to adopt a more practical, descriptive approach to laboratory technical procedures.

CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS INFORMATION

Mr. Bennett asked for committee comments on the confidential business information (CBI) portion of Section 3.4.5. It was suggested that the specification for contacting the laboratory regarding CBI questions (paragraph 5, 4th sentence) should be changed to 15 working days in order to be in line with the Federal Register specifications. The committee also agreed that the following final sentence should be added to this section: "If the responsible laboratory official does not consent to declassification of the CBI-claimed documents, the laboratory may exercise the withdrawal option as indicated in item number 4 of this paragraph."

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the committee will be at the NELAC Interim Meeting on February 3 at 10:30 a.m. in Bethesda, MD at the Hyatt Regency.

ACTION ITEMS
On-Site Assessment Committee
January 10, 1997

ACTION	Date Completed
Gary Bennett will complete the CBI draft by January 13, 1997 , and forward it to Jeanne Mourrain and Ted Coopwood.	
Jan Jablonski will complete Chapter 3 of the assessor training manual and forward to Gary Bennett by January 27, 1997 .	
Gary Bennett will distribute Chapter 3 of the assessor training manual to the Committee by January 29, 1997 .	

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
On-Site Assessment Committee Teleconference
January 10, 1997

Name	Affiliation	Phone Numbers
Mr. Gary Bennett, Chair	USEPA Region 4	T: 706-355-8551 F: 706-355-8803
Mr. Steve Ankabrandt	Eastman Chemical Co.	T: 423-229-2657 F: 423-229-3677
Ms. Rosanna Buhl	Battelle Ocean Sciences	T: 617-934-0571 F: 617-934-2124
Mr. Wayne Davis	South Carolina Department. of Health	T: 803-935-6856 F: 803-935-6859
Mr. George Dilbeck	USEPA	T: 702-798-2104 F: 702-798-2236
Mr. Doug Later	Mountain States Analytical, Inc.	T: 801-973-0050 F: 801-972-6278
Ms. Marlene Patillo	Maryland Department of the Environment	T: 410-631-3646 F: 410-631-3735
Mr. Owen Crankshaw, Contractor Support	Research Triangle Institute	T: 919-541-7470 F: 919-541-7386
Ms. Jan Jablonski, Contractor Support	Environmental Affairs Consultants	T: 703-237-7730 F: 703-532-7685